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SERIAL: (U)

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/***** THIS IS A COMBINED MESSAGE *****/

BODY -

COUNTRY: (U) SOUTH AFRICA (SF).

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SUBJECT: [REDACTED] HEATED DEBATE ERUPTS AS
PRESIDENT ((MBEKI)) SHUTS OUT THE SPECIAL INVESTIGATIVE
UNIT (HEATH COMMISSION) FROM THE ARMS DEAL PROBE (U)
WARNING: (U) THIS IS AN INFORMATION REPORT, NOT FINALLY
EVALUATED INTELLIGENCE. REPORT CLASSIFIED

~~CONFIDENTIAL~~-----
DEPARTMENT OF DEFENSE

DOI: (U) 20010122.

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SOURCE: A. (U) SUNDAY NEWSPAPER, "STAR", JOHANNESBURG, 21
JANUARY 2001 (U), ENGLISH, A POLITICALLY MODERATE PAPER WITH
A REPUTATION FOR FAIRNESS.

B. (U) DAILY NEWSPAPER, "BEELD", JOHANNESBURG, 22 JANUARY
2001 (U), AFRIKAANS, THE PAPER IS VIEWED AS POLITICALLY
MODERATE AND HAS REPORTED RELIABLY IN THE PAST.

C. (U) DAILY NEWSPAPER, "THE CITIZEN", JOHANNESBURG, SOUTH
AFRICA, 22 JANUARY 2001 (U), ENGLISH, THE PAPER IS VIEWED AS
POLITICALLY MODERATE AND HAS REPORTED RELIABLY IN THE PAST.

D. (U) DAILY NEWSPAPER, "THE CITIZEN", JOHANNESBURG, SOUTH
AFRICA, 23 JANUARY 2001 (U), ENGLISH, THE PAPER IS VIEWED AS
POLITICALLY MODERATE AND HAS REPORTED RELIABLY IN THE PAST.

E. (U) DAILY NEWSPAPER, "STAR", JOHANNESBURG, 23 JANUARY
2001 (U), ENGLISH, A POLITICALLY MODERATE PAPER WITH A
REPUTATION FOR FAIRNESS.

SUMMARY: ~~(C)~~ PRESIDENT ((MBEKI)) REFUSED TO INVOLVE THE
INDEPENDENT SPECIAL INVESTIGATIVE UNIT, HEADED BY JUDGE
WILLEM ((HEATH)), IN A PROBE OF CORRUPTION IN THE 43 BILLION
RAND ARMS DEAL. ANC PARLIAMENT MEMBERS BREAK WITH THE
GOVERNMENT TO REQUEST HEATH'S INVOLVEMENT.

TEXT: 1. ~~(C)~~ SOURCE A REPORTED THAT DURING A TELEVISED
ANNOUNCEMENT ON FRIDAY 19 JANUARY 2001, SOUTH AFRICAN
PRESIDENT THABO ((MBEKI)) STATED THAT THE INDEPENDENT SPECIAL
INVESTIGATIVE UNIT, HEADED BY JUDGE WILLEM ((HEATH)), WOULD
NOT BE INCLUDED IN A PROBE OF POSSIBLE CORRUPTION IN THE 43
BILLION RAND ARMS DEAL. (NOTE: ONE US DOLLAR EQUALS 7.9 SA
RAND). IT FURTHER REPORTED THAT IN AN UNUSUAL MOVE JUDGE
HEATH HAD CALLED NELSON ((MANDELA)) TO REQUEST A
"TESTIMONIAL" REGARDING THE JUDGE'S ABILITIES TO "ALL THAT
WOULD CALL". THIS SO INCENSED MBEKI THAT HE LAUNCHED A
SCATHING PERSONAL ATTACK ON JUDGE HEATH DURING THE FRIDAY
BROADCAST, WAVING AN ORGANIZATIONAL CHART THAT ALLEGEDLY
IMPLICATED MBEKI AND MANDELA AS BEING A PART OF THE
CORRUPTION. EVIDENTLY, MANDELA CALLED HEATH ON SATURDAY TO
REBUKE THE LATTER'S IMPLICATION THAT MBEKI OR MANDELA WERE
INVOLVED IN CORRUPTION OVER THE ARMS DEAL.

2. (U) IN SOURCE B, PATRICIA ((DE LILLE)), PAN AFRICANIST
CONGRESS PARTY (PAC) PARLIAMENTARIAN, IS QUOTED AS SAYING
THAT MBEKI'S REFUSAL SPARKS A "CONSTITUTIONAL CRISIS" AND

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SHOWS THE CONTEMPT FOR PARLIAMENT THAT THE EXECUTIVE BRANCH HOLDS. SHEVOWED THAT THE PAC WOULD TAKE THE MATTER OF THE HEATH COMMISSION'S INCLUSION INTO THE ARMS PROBE TO THE SUPREME COURT.

3. (U) IN SOURCE C, OPPOSITION LEADER TONY ((LEON)), OF THE DEMOCRATIC ALLIANCE, IS REPORTED URGING PRESIDENT MBEKI TO PROVIDE MORETRANSPARENCY IN GOVERNMENT PROCUREMENT. HE SAID, "INSTEAD OF DEALING WITH THE ARMS DEAL IN A TRANSPARENT AND OPEN MANNER, ...THERE'S (THE APPEARANCE OF) SKULLDUGGERY OF THE HIGHEST ORDER THAT NEEDS TO BE CONCEALED. WE HAVE ... THREE OF THE WORST ATTRIBUTES OF THIS GOVERNMENT - ARROGANCE, CLUMSINESS AND MISSED OPPORTUNITY."

4. (U) IN SOURCE D, IT WAS REPORTED THAT THE PARLIAMENT STANDING COMMITTEE ON PUBLIC ACCOUNTS (SCOPA), GAVE FULL BACKING TO THE PROBE. IN A BREAK FROM MBEKI, THIS INCLUDED AFRICA NATIONAL CONGRESS (ANC) MEMBERS OF THE COMMITTEE (ALTHOUGH THEY LATER BACKED OFF UNDER PRESSURE FROM THE PARTY).

5. (U) INSOURCE E, IT WAS REVEALED THAT THE ORGANIZATIONAL CHART (PARA 1) WAS FROM A JOURNALIST'S NOTES THAT WERE "FOUND" BY INTELLIGENCE INVESTIGATORS AND NOT DRAWN UP BY JUDGE HEATH AS ALLEGED BYMBEKI.

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(i);Sec. 1.4(c)

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